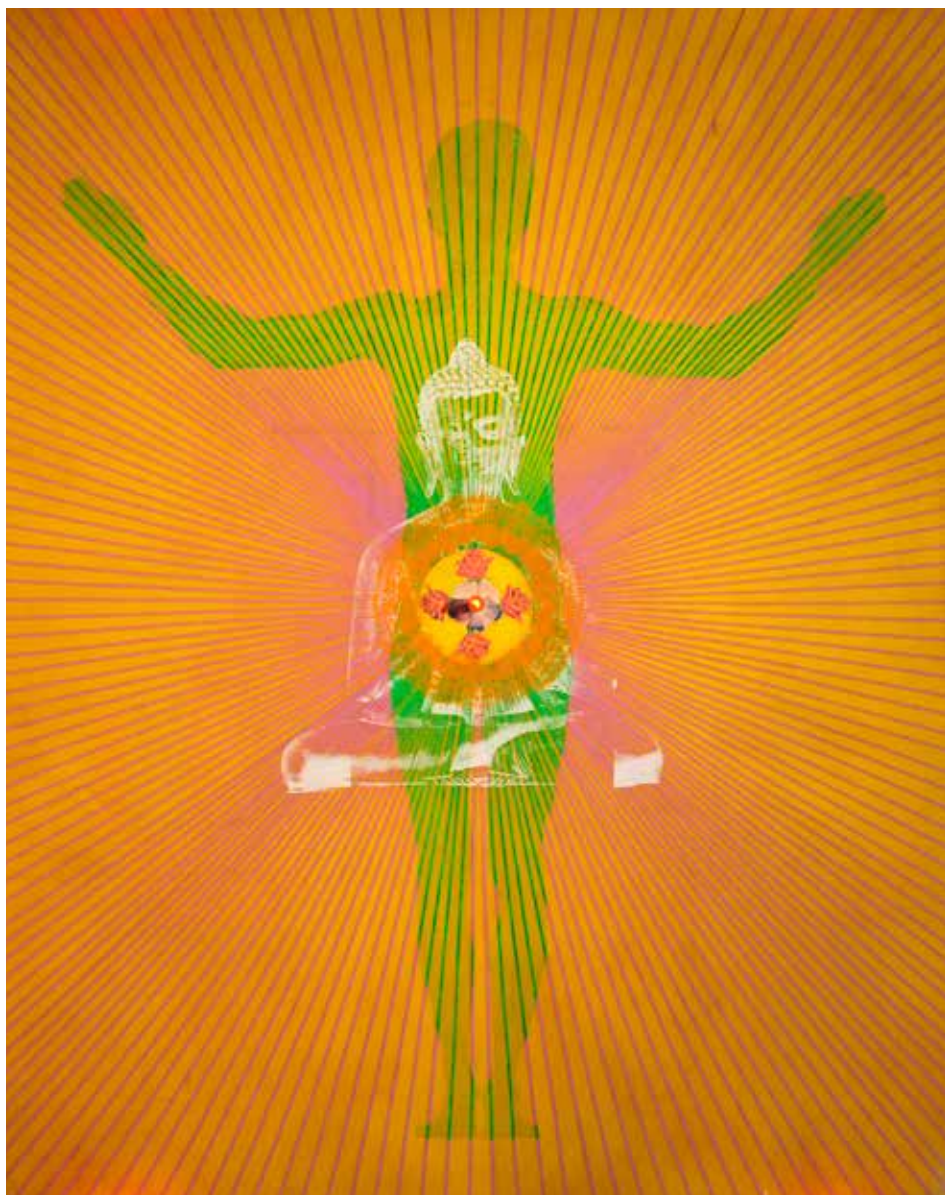


NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART  
MARCH 3, 2019

# USCO

**Films, Performance, and Conversation  
with 1960s Multimedia Pioneers**



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USC's Tabernacle, Garnerville,  
New York, 1967. Courtesy of  
Michael Callahan

MARCH 3, 2019 / 2:00  
EAST BUILDING AUDITORIUM

# Films

## ***Us Down By the Riverside***

1966, USCO and Jud Yalkut / 16mm, color, sound, 3 minutes

A visionary documentation of the USCO installation at the Riverside Museum, New York, in 1966. The exhibition was famously featured in the September 9, 1966, *LIFE* magazine cover story on psychedelic art. Quoted in the article, USCO first introduced the term “Be-In” to a mass audience.

## ***Us (aka Building the Tabernacle)***

1966, USCO and Jud Yalkut / 16mm, color, silent, 16 minutes

Consisting of film footage shot by Jud Yalkut during his tenure as USCO’s filmmaker, the documentary centers on the construction of the Tabernacle, USCO’s church built in 1966 in Garnerville, New York. A spiritual and aesthetic meditation environment that was both unique and groundbreaking, the Tabernacle featured paintings by Steve Durkee.

**With thanks to the  
Film-Makers’ Cooperative  
for the loan of their  
16mm film prints**

# Performance

*Verbal American Landscape* marks the first collaboration between Michael Callahan and Gerd Stern. Stern became interested in the poetic possibilities of combining language with images. After collaborating with photographer Stewart Brand and artist Ivan Majdrakoff to assemble a collection of images, Stern enlisted Callahan to assist with the sound engineering for a multimedia presentation, *Who R U and What’s Happening?* at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1963. It further developed into one of USCO’s multimedia performances.

*From Hubbub to We Are All One* is a recreation and mix of two of USCO’s multimedia performances. *Hubbub*, named after a quote by Martin Luther, was the earlier version that later became *We Are All One*. *We Are All One* developed through a post-psychedelic realization that multiplicity and fragmentation were aspects capable of transformation into unity through meditation and focused consciousness. USCO attempted to achieve “oneness” through media techniques available to them during the 1960s. This performance utilizes the equipment and technology of the period. It features multiple carousels of slides, programmed and pulsed by a mixed electromechanical and electronic device designed and built by Michael Callahan, as well as sound from quarter-inch audio tape reels. The slides were originally assembled by Adrienne Callahan, Michael Callahan, Barbara Durkee, Gerd Stern, and Judi Stern.

# Conversation

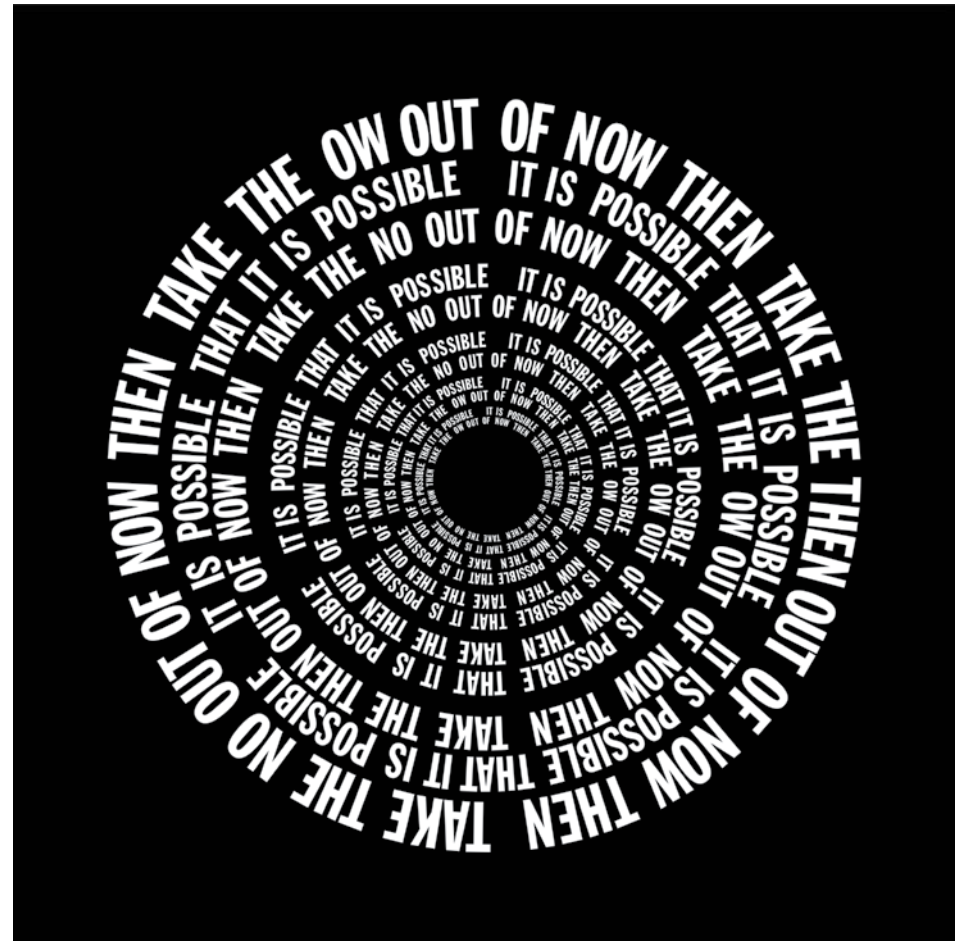
**Michael Callahan and Gerd Stern of USCO. Moderated by Paige Rozanski, Curatorial Associate, Department of Modern Art, National Gallery of Art**

The conversation will feature a discussion about the art collective USCO, their practice, and the multimedia performances they created during the 1960s. Drawing upon the influences of technology and religion, USCO utilized everyday materials, new communication apparatuses, and Eastern and Western mysticism to create artworks that bombarded and overloaded the senses.



left USCO and friends at the Church, Garnerville, New York, April 1964, from left: Barbara and Steve Durkee (holding Dakota), Judi Stern, Chris George, Gerd Stern, Owen Jones, Michael Callahan, Radha Stern, Jane Burton, Stewart and Lois Brand. Courtesy of Intermedia Foundation

below Gerd Stern, *NO OW NOW, USCO Two Mantras*, 1966–1970 / 2017, vinyl. Courtesy of USCO and Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati



**cover** USCO (Gerd Stern, Stephen Durkee, Michael Callahan), *Shiva* (detail), 1965, paint on canvas, electric lights. Courtesy of USCO and Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati

**back cover** USCO (Gerd Stern, Michael Callahan), *Contact Is the Only Love*, 1963/2000, metal, concrete, rubber, custom electronics, lights. Courtesy of USCO and Carl Solway Gallery, Cincinnati

